



**U.S. Department of Justice**

United States Attorney  
Northern District of Texas

1100 Commerce St., 3rd Fl.  
Dallas, Texas 75242-1699

Telephone (214)659-8600  
Fax (214)767-2898

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: 214/659-8707  
[www.usdoj.gov/usao/txn](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/txn)

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**MAJOR NORTH TEXAS COCAINE DISTRIBUTORS SENTENCED**

***Fort Worth Men Each Sentenced to 20 Years in Federal  
Prison Without Parole for Cocaine Distribution  
and Money Laundering Convictions***

Richard B. Roper, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Texas, announced that in federal court in Fort Worth, Texas, Hector Salas Ruiz was sentenced on Friday by the Honorable John McBryde, United States District Judge, to 240 months imprisonment, without parole, following his guilty plea in February to conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute more than five kilograms of cocaine, money laundering and a forfeiture allegation. A co-defendant/co-conspirator, Iraelio Charon, who pled guilty in January to similar charges, was sentenced by Judge McBryde in March to 240 months imprisonment without parole.

"Here federal and Fort Worth law enforcement worked together to put major narcotics traffickers in jail for two decades," said U.S. Attorney Roper. "I applaud Judge McBryde's tough sentence," Roper continued.

Beginning in May 2003, Dallas Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agents began an investigation into the activities of a major North Texas cocaine distributor, Iraelio Charon. As a part of the investigation, investigators applied for and received authorization to execute a wire interception of Charon's cellphone. During the interceptions, several persons, including the defendant Hector Ruiz, were identified as Charon's associates in the cocaine business. Hector Ruiz supplied Charon and others with cocaine hydrochloride.

The investigation revealed that the defendants Hector Ruiz and Iraelio Charon, along with several co-conspirators, distributed cocaine in the North Texas area for some time. Prior to March 2003, Ruiz recruited a co-conspirator to transport cocaine from the Mexican Border to the North Texas area. On March 28, 2003, approximately 15 kilograms of cocaine were seized by U.S. Customs at the Eagle Pass, Texas, port of entry that were destined for Ruiz in Fort Worth, Texas. That co-conspirator had been contacted by Ruiz who said that he had five pickup trucks that were ready to be taken down South and wanted him to find drivers for the trucks. The co-conspirator got the drivers and she and the drivers picked the trucks up at Ruiz Auto Sales located on 28<sup>th</sup> Street in Fort Worth and were to load the cocaine on the trucks and deliver it to Ruiz Auto Sales. Ruiz would then take the trucks to a residence at 2624 Daisy Lane in Fort Worth and off load the cocaine.

On November 28, 2003, Ruiz called Charon and told Charon that he had “two girls” (slang for two kilograms of cocaine) ready to go to the dance and asked him if he wanted them and Charon said he did. Ruiz delivered the two kilograms of cocaine to Charon and then Charon delivered it to another person.

On December 15, 2003, Ruiz called Charon and told him that he had four guys (slang for four kilograms of cocaine) and wanted to know if Charon wanted them. On December 18, 2003, Ruiz called Charon and told him that the 12 workers (kilos of cocaine) were in and that he would bring them to Charon’s house. On December 19, 2003, Charon sold a DEA informant 995.1 grams of cocaine that he received from Ruiz on December 18, 2003. On December 22, 2003, Ruiz called Charon and told him that a buddy called and needed five workers and wanted Charon to return five kilograms of cocaine. Charon agreed. Ruiz said that his buddy was leaving and he also wanted to give him the papers (slang for drug proceeds), and asked Charon how many papers he had. Later the same day, Ruiz called Charon and asked if he could bring six workers, and Charon said that he had already picked up the five kilograms and was heading over to the meet location. Ruiz called Charon and told Charon that a particular individual would meet with him. Charon gave this person five kilograms of cocaine and \$18,000.00 cash which were to be returned to Ruiz.

During his participation in the charged conspiracy, Ruiz purchased a number of properties with the proceeds of the conspiracy. Ruiz would put the properties in the names of other persons to conceal his interest in the property. On or about September 2, 2003, Hector Ruiz purchased a property known as 2200 Eden, Haltom City, Texas, using the name of a co-conspirator as a nominee to conceal his interest in the property. The property was purchased for \$184,000.00 in cash, which were proceeds of the drug conspiracy alleged in Count 1 and in Count 23 of the Second Superseding Indictment. Ruiz personally conducted the negotiations for the purchase of the residence with the seller.

Gary G. Olenkiewicz, Special Agent in Charge of the Dallas Field Division of the Drug Enforcement Administration, remarked that, “DEA lauds the sentence by the Federal District Court against Mr. Hector Ruiz. Friday’s sentencing has sent a strong message to other drug traffickers that the drug law enforcement community has and will continue to build the strongest possible criminal cases. One by one, we are dismantling the most dangerous drug distribution organizations that are responsible for poisoning our citizens and neighborhoods. These investigations, combined with thorough and effective prosecution by the U.S. Attorney’s Office, positively impact our community and further demonstrate DEA’s commitment to that process.”

“These coordinated multi-agency efforts are the only effective means to investigate and dismantle sophisticated criminal organizations. Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI) contributes the financial investigators and expertise that is critical to analyzing the financial transactions and locating the money,” said Michael Lacenski, Special Agent in Charge of the Dallas Field Office of IRS-CI.

U.S. Attorney Roper praised the investigative efforts of the Drug Enforcement Administration, Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI), the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Fort Worth Police Department. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney J. Michael Worley.